2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

Chapter 5

A DREAM COMES TRUE

122 THOUGH happily occupied with his other language work, David was pondering sadly on how much Burushaski there was yet to learn; how many questions of custom, beliefs, etc., he had not been able to pursue; how many knotty problems could only be resolved by a visit to Hunza and a study of peasant life on the spot. We toyed with the idea; it haunted us; it lured us. But a military pension in a post-War world, with a daughter still at school, could not by any arithmetical juggling be made to finance a private expedition to the Karakoram. Then luck took a hand. An elderly maiden aunt in Scotland, whose very existence David had almost forgotten, on whom we had no claim and from whom we had no "expectations," came to die, and left a small legacy. Prudence might suggest investing it, but what is the annual income from a couple of hundred pounds, which may at any moment be "converted" into even less? Common sense pointed out that this was not nearly enough for so long and expensive a journey and a lengthy stay. It wasn't. Then luck once more took a hand. One day we read in *The Times* of the new Leverhulme Research Fellowships for advanced workers, who lacked means or opportunity to complete a piece of research already begun. Not for some days did the idea dawn on us that perhaps David might come into the category of possible "fellows."

We pooh-poohed it to each other. The research would need to be on the line of pulverizing atoms, or curing cancer, or curving space, or liquefying air, or adding another span to already useless lives; it could hardly cover research into the speech and life of the Burusho of Hunza. Yet while laughing at the thought that our work could seriously engage the atten-

tion of the Leverhulme Trustees, DL decided to lay his 122
programme and his financial problems before them. We could hardly believe our eyes or ears when we found that he was one of the first seventeen fortunate workers to be awarded a fellowship for which there had been four hundred applicants. We wasted some sympathetic philosophizings on the 383, and then began to think. There was a lot to think of.

It would take time to make preliminary arrangements, and while these were going forward DL attended lectures on Anthropology at London University, since clearly the anthropological approach to our task would be the most helpful, though his interest was primarily linguistic. We were both reasonably widely read in the subject, but in Professor Malinowski's lectures and seminars at the London School of Economics he got encouragement and stimulus, as well as new and useful points of view, and made many valuable acquaintances. In the interval various negotiations were proceeding. Would the Government of India permit an ex-Political Officer to return and settle for a year or more unofficially in his successor's bailiwick? Would the present Political Agent have enough faith to raise no objection? Would the Mir of Hunza, firm friend though he had always been, welcome the proceeding? The suggestion was entirely unprecedented. Retired officials do not come back.

> Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,
> And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.

Obviously an indiscreet ex-Political Agent might raise all kinds of trouble. Could all these parties be convinced that DL's interests were wholly scientific? Could they believe that he would show tact and detachment enough to cause no disturbance in the happy but always delicate relations between the Mir and his people, the Political Agent and the Mir?

To everybody's credit—not least, perhaps, to the memories of goodwill and understanding that DL had left behind him—Government opposed no objection, while the Mir and the Political Agent, Major Gillan, offered a cordial welcome; but all this varied correspondence took time.

A DREAM COMES TRUE

122 We were grateful for what was ultimately accorded: permission to go at all; to use the Government rest-houses *en route*, subject, of course, to the prior claims of officers travelling on duty; to draw supplies on payment from depots of the Indian Army Service Corps (more familiarly known to us by its original name of the Supply and Transport Department); to bring in kit and equipment duty free. This was a very great deal.

I seem perhaps to be dwelling rather sordidly on money matters, but despite the generosity of the aunt and the Leverhulme, we were going to have to exercise the utmost economy at every step if we were to avoid bankruptcy. A minor deficit we might hope to make good by spartan retrenchment on our return—though our normal way of life left little room for more spartanism—but a major deficit would be a disaster. And the expenses ahead were impossible to estimate.

3: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

000 5. To complete the vocabulary and to collect obsolete and obsolescent words. There are a multitude of general terms to be collected, while there is undoubtedly an immense field of "technical" terms, in the widest sense, to be covered.

In the last task the most fruitful line of approach will be by the way of anthropological interests and anthropological methods. Burushaski also appears to have a great facility in the metaphorical use of specific words, especially verbs. These uses can only be educed with time, patience and experience.

To these various subjects for enquiry, except the first, I now hope to be able to make some contribution.

114 Self-determination and luck have brought me again, after ten
122 years, to the land of the Burusho, in the midst of whom, at Aliabad in Hunza EOL and I are now living. This luck I owe "first", as they would say here "to the grace of God", and then to the "kindness" of the Trustees of the Leverhulme Research Fellowship Fund, who have granted me substantial financial assistance. It is a short time spent again with Burushaski-speakers that has enabled me to say above that the Texts and Grammar appear to be generally sound beyond my dreams. This does not at all mean that they are impeccable.

How much can now be done will again be governed by the time factor — the harvest is ripe, but the labourers are few.

But this is anticipating.

000 Meanwhile in what concerns the present work there remains to me the pleasure of paying many debts of very genuine gratitude. To the Thám of Hunza, Sir Muhammad Nazim Khan, K.C.I.E., I have paid my tribute in the Dedication. To him I owe much personal kindness and hospitality and also the services of IYB over a long period. The Burushaski of the Dedication, I may say, has been constrained with much expert advice to an unprecedented use.

Next I have to thank my active collaborators, to whom ultimately everything is due, Jemadar Imam Yar Beg, Inayat Ullah Beg,

& Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935
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PREFACE.

The following Vocabularies are based on the material collected in 1923—24, to which reference has been made in the Introduction, Volume I (pp. lvi. ff.), and were completed in 1930—31.

Thanks to assistance received from the Leverhulme Research Fund, I was able to revisit Gilgit and Hunza in 1934—35, and I then collected a considerable amount of new material.

Of this practically nothing has been incorporated in the present work. The additions, in the way both of new entries and of the elaboration of the existing entries, would have been considerable, and their preparation would have entailed great delay in publication. As matters stand I have not yet worked out the new material[1], and this has saved me from much temptation.

The revision of the *Burushaski—English Vocabulary* as it already existed, was, however, one of the many items of a too ambitious programme, which I did carry out, if only in a hasty and perfunctory way.

For this work I was fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Qudratullah Beg (QUB), son of Subadar Muhabbatullah Beg, a literate and extremely intelligent young man, with a remarkable feeling for language and the refinements of phonetics.

A thorough examination of the forms, meanings and uses of the words in even this very modest vocabulary would have been a major task requiring an almost infinite amount of time. I had therefore

[1] Attention may, however, be called to a note on certain features of Burushaski, published in the BSOS Vol. VIII, 1936, pp. 627—636, which throws light on some grammatical and phonetic devices of the language.

7:Tobe C, T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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CHAPTER 28

Old Baltit Fort

SOME TIME BEFORE 6 o'clock in the morning a tray containing a huge pot of tea, cups, sugar and biscuits was brought into our room and placed on a table between our beds. The servant quietly departed.

Friend Cecil[1] was feeling much better this morning and wanted to get up and about, but the doctor had ordered that he remain in bed.

So, sharp at 8 o'clock, after saying good morning and cheerio to Cecil, I trotted down the stairs. At the landing there was young Jahangir waiting for me. I had made a rendezvous with him for this time—the thought being that we should have breakfast together so as to give less trouble to the Mir or his household.

The doctor came up a moment later and said that he would go up and visit his patient and would meet us at the Mir's table.

Both the Mir and the Rani were expecting us and

1 [i.e. Cecil Brunton - Analyst].

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after the usual greetings, he asked how Cec was doing. 122

"He seems to be quite a bit better today!"

"I'm awfully sorry he had to leave last night," said the Mir.

I didn't think he'd even noticed it—but he had.

"The doctor is up visiting him now," I told him. "He said he would join us in a few minutes."

"What does he usually have for breakfast?" the Mir asked me.

"Oatmeal, poached or soft boiled eggs, toast, jam and coffee would be wonderful if they are available."

"Not only is it available," said the Mir, "it is ready, for that is part of the breakfast we usually prepare for our guests. It will be taken up to him immediately."

A signal and a few words in Burushaski and Cecil's breakfast was well on its way up.

So we had breakfast in the dining room and chatted 124 and I sought to make every moment count by asking questions that were vital to me . . . that is, questions about Hunza.

I am quite sure that the Rani understood most of [191] the things that we talked about. She could not have been shamming as she looked both interested and charming while the conversation went on.

"I have arranged for an interpreter to accompany 124 you on your trips and you can go wherever you like, 115 providing you can get through and the roads are open," 191 the Mir told us.

Shortly after, Sultan Ali appeared. He was the schoolmaster and also taught the Mir's children at home. He was to be our interpreter and guide. He was a slender, handsome young man. I'd judge his age as being in the early twenties. His command of English was very good. But I don't think his English was up to the standard spoken by the Mir, who spoke so fluently

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These chambers were once living rooms and bedrooms. It reminded me of a penthouse. While it didn't have an elevator to whiz you upwards in a matter of seconds or the best in modern plumbing, it did have the air, the view, the history and fascination that no penthouse in creation could match.

Back about 400 years ago one of the rulers of Hunza married a daughter of the King of Baltistan who, as a gift to his daughter and her husband, dispatched 500 workmen from his country to Hunza to erect the Baltit Fort that we now know. The rulers of Hunza dwelt in that fort and made it their palace until recent times. The present Mir, too, when he took office after the death of his father, resided in this palace known as Baltit Fort.

The new palace, in which we were being wined, dined and entertained, had been completed recently and was taken possession of by the present Mir about 7 years ago. Actually though, the new palace was started by the Mir's grandfather back as far as 1925.

While we were guests at the palace, extensive masonry work was in progress as the Mir was having a broad, low, stone-walled veranda erected. This, I understand, would be used, on completion, as his court, where the citizens of Hunza would come with their problems and where the Mir would preside in judgment.

However, this work in no way interfered with the normal functions of the household, for, even as the people of Hunza follow the custom of moving upstairs for the summer and downstairs for the winter, so did the Mir.

To me, however, old Baltit Fort was an edifice of distinction, charm and beauty and if I were in the Mir's place, I would never have abandoned it.

Ayesh was a most jovial character. He had the most pleasant smiling happy countenance of any man I've ever met. He was always either laughing or smiling and every time I looked at him I had to smile as well. He was a handsome man but in contrast to the Mir, who had a good head of dark hair, Ayesh was balding, the same as I.

It was most pleasant to see the splendid cordial relationship that existed between him and the Mir's entire family.

"How are you coming along with your quest for information?" asked the Mir.

"Exceptionally well, sir," I replied. "But there are also many questions that only you can answer and I'm hoping that you can spare a few minutes some time within the next few days in private so that I may gain this information."

"Any time you say," replied the Mir pleasantly. "I'm at your disposal. You mention the time and that will be it."

"You are indeed very kind to grant me this great favor and I appreciate it," I said.

So there and then we made an appointment for 5 o'clock the following day.

Every meal at the Mir's was a joy and a delight and both the Mir and the Rani were always present. I had already mentioned to him that this was a trouble and an imposition and too much to expect of him. But he said that it was the way he wanted it and that nothing was too good and no effort too great for his guests. Well, what can you do with a man like that?

Then he informed me concerning my friend's health. "The doctor has things under control now," he told me, "but he will remain here with me as my guest at the palace during your stay so there will be no worries

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122 or cares in regard to Mr. Brunton's condition. The doc-
[758] tor will attend to his duties at Aliabad and look after the hospital there . . . but he only has one or two patients and he will be back and forth from the hospital to the palace. Therefore he will be in constant touch with your friend."

"No man could do more," I assured the Mir. "I don't know how we can ever thank you enough."

"Don't mention it," he said. "You have been very kind, too."

"Now is there anything that you would like me to get for you while you're here? I wish you would tell me because some things may take a few days to procure or prepare and I would like to have them ready for you."

[124] "I'll tell you what I would like and you tell me what you would like me to send you from Canada—and no holds barred." I said to him.

"Fair enough! We'll tell each other frankly what we want."

"Agreed," I joyfuly replied.

126 I always carry a notebook with me. It's a small folding affair made of leatherette or something, that has room for 3 or 4 ball point pens and a pad inside. I was making notes as well as marking down the things the Mir expressed interest in when I spoke of the conveniences available in America. I intended to send these to him anyway.

I had seen quite a few little items around Hunza that I would have liked to have . . . for instance, a Hunzan hat, a cane made in Hunza, a pair of Hunzan boots. The boots are most unusual, being something like the mukluks used in the north by the Eskimos, except that these are made in a simpler manner. They are somewhat like riding boots in shape except they are

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CHAPTER 31

Breakfast Chitchat

122 574 THE MIR was a most tolerant and understanding host. I can't say for sure whether or not all his guests were treated as well as I, but I have no reason to believe otherwise.

Sometimes I would get down to breakfast alone at 8 o'clock in the morning. On other occasions there was Jahangir, sometimes Cec and on some occasions the doctor and the Mir's uncle and a few other individuals. I usually tried to get down at 8 o'clock . . . yet, there were occasions when I got down at 6 o'clock, if I had some adventure or specific project in view.

353 792 I remember this specific breakfast because the first thing I said to the Mir after I was seated at the table was, "I would judge that you were very fond of the Aga Khan."

You see, it wasn't very hard for me to judge this fact because our apartment was hung with pictures

of the Aga Khan and his wife in various poses and stages of his life. I had given some study to these photographs and many of them were inscribed in the hand of the Aga Khan with endearing terms to his friend, Jamal.

Our quarters were in the guest house—actually adjoining the palace but on a higher level. This building had been erected by the Mir's grandfather back in 1925. It was a well-built, handsome structure, firmly ensconced on a high rocky ledge of granite.

You walked down the Mir's long staircase from the sun room, then you walked up half a dozen or more stone steps, forward a few feet and then you climbed up a circular, enclosed wooden staircase to the guest quarters. These consisted of a large, comfortable sitting room with many easy chairs and a fine writing desk, a large bedroom with two comfortable beds and further on was the bathroom. Then to the right of the lovely sitting room was a balcony—spacious and inviting. From it you could view Rakaposhi and all its splendor and gorgeous loveliness.

The furniture all round was similar to that which you would find in the average better-class American homes. Photographs adorned the walls, among which were the photos of the old Aga Khan and his French wife.

When I mentioned the Aga Khan to the Mir, he waxed eloquent and his face beamed and he said, "Not only was I fond of him—not only did I love him—but we were close intimate friends. He was the most generous of men and especially to the people of Hunza. I revere his memory! He was a wonderful person. We really miss him since his passing. His ancestors came from Persia to India in 1834. In 1934, one hundred years later, to celebrate the jubilee of the founding of

partake of the Mir's blessings. 000

In comparing the fort at Altit and the one at Baltit, I gained the impression that the one at Altit had more rooms . . . smaller ones they were, but there seemed to be more of them. The old fort at Baltit was much larger and more impressive. Yet somehow I became more attached to the Altit Fort. I had the impression that it was almost impregnable. 344 644 712

Then I recalled the true story of the capture of the fort by the British and, after appraising its isolation, strength and precipitous banks and sides, I thought to myself, "Any group of men who had the courage to attempt to scale and capture any fort in Hunza deserved a lot more glory and loot than they would ever get in Hunza . . . and that is for certain!" 712 648

On one of the balconies stood a man with a bowl of apricots and Sultan Ali said, "This man is the chowkidor, or guardian, of the fort and it is customary to give him a gift." 124

"Of what?" I asked.

"Oh, about 10 rupees," replied Sultan Ali.

Jahangir almost jumped a foot when he heard that and he said, "For what? He hasn't done anything and we haven't eaten any of his apricots."

"Well," Sultan Ali said, "it's just customary!"

"Customary or no," said Jahangir, "I think it's ridiculous!"

I turned to Sultan Ali and said, "Normally I'd be glad to give him the tip that you suggest, but the truth of the matter is my fund of Pakistan rupees is just about nonexistent. When we set out for Hunza from Pindi we calculated in advance approximately how many rupees we would need and then we added on 100 extra, and that's what we came with. 124 122

"From the stories that we read and from the infor-

124 mation that we could gather, we were under the im-
122 pression that no money was used in Hunza. Therefore we didn't calculate on spending any. So far we have parted with approximately 300 rupees and to place the matter squarely in front of you, we don't have enough money to buy our plane tickets back from Gilgit to Rawalpindi! I'm hoping we'll be able to get some money at the bank in Gilgit because I did notice that there's a bank there, so I'm afraid I'll have to pass up the 10 rupees that I'm supposed to give the chowkidor of the fort. But tell him I enjoyed my visit to the fort very much anyway!"

344 While we were wandering around on the open bal-
644 cony of the old fort, Sultan Ali pointed to a neat looking place down below, but not far distant, and said, "That is the Mir's picnic place, where he comes every Saturday evening with his family. He stays there Sunday and Monday, returning to the palace for his various duties Monday evening. This practice is followed during the summer months."

"Well," I replied, "that's a custom that's followed pretty well in the West and probably in most places around the world . . . where one tries to get away from the usual home conditions and seeks refuge in a cottage. We, generally speaking, call this our summer cottage. And you know what? Many folks and families travel hundreds of miles just for the weekend, just as long as they can get away from home and the sameness of living for a few days at a time!"

"I guess we've seen everything here at the old fort worth seeing. So let's go down and make for the Mir's picnic place," I said as I headed for the stairs.

It was a walk of but a few hundred yards and we were soon at the garden gate of the bungalow. Sultan Ali spoke in Burushaski to one of the chowkidors who

115 Now I didn't see his birth certificate and I might as
165 well tell you, right here and now, that no vital statistics are kept in Hunza. I accept the figure of his age as he told me but remember, I was not there at the time of his birth!

344 When I was through with my spasm of inspection
644 and admiration, we began to parade up the long driveway that led into the Mir's garden. This area is flanked on the right by space that looks as though it were a parking lot, and maybe that's exactly what it is, but instead of cars, the guests or members of the family park—or should I say tether—their horses and yaks in this area. Maybe now they park their jeeps there.
[493] The Mir owns two of them, but one, I understand, was away in Pindi being repaired. (Or was it the shambles and horrible wreck of a jeep that I came across a week later, on the road back to Gilgit?)

126 Now I noticed that the Mir, Ayesh, the doctor and Cec were coming along the roadway to meet us, and soon we joined forces and were gathered in one group. I thought this was the ideal time to take some photographs and, luckily for us, they were the best photographs we took on the entire trip. Photography is something that has never interested me and I had never
[122] taken half a dozen pictures in my life. Before leaving home, I did try to learn a bit about photography, but I couldn't learn enough fast enough.

124 When the fun, excitement and fast-flowing humorous remarks had subsided, I said to the Mir, "If you've nothing more important to do or if you would care to give me a little more of your time, we could start that question and answer session that I arranged with you for this afternoon."

"I am at your service," he replied pleasantly and with alacrity.

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question, the error was cleared up. 128

Remember, I do not claim to be a Sherlock Holmes 124
or smart enough to detect by scent or otherwise an untruth or misunderstanding, so they may crop up in various places in the book.

Long before I left home I had prepared a set of queries. Among them were things for me to investigate —places, customs and chores for me to see and do. And from all this I was to make my own values and estimates as to the validity of the claims made about Hunza and its people. I tried to cover every aspect of importance and interest and I believe that, with very few exceptions, I faithfully accomplished my mission.

In preparation for the trip I read every book I could 122 •
find or locate that involved Hunza and in each case 114
the author had done a credible job, but most of them had failed miserably to give sufficient information—at least, for me—because 'twas information that I wanted. I wanted to know more about the agriculture of Hunza, about the health of the people, about their methods, their means and their way of life. None of the authors gave much of that vital data.

Right from the first moment that I made plans to go 121
to Hunza I decided that, if I wrote a book, it would 114
contain the most complete, the most detailed and the most thorough study of the people of Hunza yet accomplished by any writer. This determination came upon me from the frustrations I felt when I read the available books on Hunza and was left with a feeling that only the surface of the subject had been scratched.

In my endeavors to fulfill this undertaking, I have spared neither time, effort, risk nor expense. I certainly don't want my readers to be left with the feeling that all about Hunza has not been told. I definitely realize that no one in a short few weeks or even months could

000 of his fellow man and see that it is fairly and impartially carried out, we have made it too complicated. Is there any justifiable reason why it should take months or even years for a civil case to be heard in court? If there are not sufficient judges, I'm sure it would not be difficult to appoint or elect more of them. If there are not enough court rooms and court houses, I feel confident that, with American construction at its high peak of efficiency, it wouldn't take long to correct that.

642 643 Then why isn't it done? I don't know the answer. Do you? The Hunzan system of justice seems to be functioning in a most satisfactory manner. Anyone may petition the Mir and unless he is away, can get an almost immediate hearing. If the Mir is not available or if the problem is not a weighty one, then the Wazir can attend to it.

In truth, justice can be simple!

* * * * *

486 122 In order to get into Hunza you must obtain a permit from the Pakistani authorities in the capital, which is Karachi, but I understand the government is being moved from Karachi to Rawalpindi or a new site close to it. I still think it is more important to have the Mir's invitation, because even though you could get into Hunza, you would be practically helpless without the Mir's assistance and cooperation.

[124] Unless you brought a guide with you and one who could speak English and translate for you, you'd find the going very, very difficult in either Nagir or Hunza. Therefore I would suggest that if you contemplate a visit into this area, you obtain the Mir's invitation or permission first. Then go after the Pakistani government's permit.

648 131 Why the Pakistan government regards Hunza as a strategic region or area is not hard to understand if

durance and stamina known anywhere, and if Shipton says that the Hunzans had more endurance and stamina than these people, no higher tribute can be given.

It is my humble opinion that too much has been written about the people of Hunza by people who have never been there and know little or nothing about the actual conditions that prevail in that country. Then, too, many visitors spent most of their time taking pictures, viewing the scenery and dining at the Mir's and didn't pay much attention or learn anything about the actual living conditions of the people.

The people of Hunza have not in the least benefited by the visitors that have reached Hunza, and if future visits are discouraged, I believe there would be good cause for it.

Most of the diseases known to civilization are unknown in Hunza. I do not ask you to take my word for it but that is my report from consulting the resident doctor in Hunza, as well as a German woman doctor who visited Hunza.

It is further true that the Mir's wife, the Rani of Hunza, had her appendix removed and she took a trip to Rawalpindi to have it done. But in the first place she does not live according to Hunza standards and besides, it was probably stylish to have an appendix operation. On the other hand, if a good surgeon were let loose in Hunza for a few weeks, there's no doubt about it, he'd have hundreds of appendixes removed before he could be stopped.

Another important point that I wish to make at this time is that I paid my own way to and from Hunza. I had no financial backing. Therefore I am not committed to aid anyone or any product or radio station or newspaper. I have no one to fear and no one to please. I can afford to tell the truth.

actually make me sick and my skin would break out in sores or a rash. 137

In truth, I wasn't much worried, but, on the other hand, prudence must be considered. I was a long way from home, with a medicine kit that consisted of a bit of bandage and some salve, and I was in no position to do battle with some unknown, dangerous and perhaps poisonous plant. So I heeded their entreaties and left that symmetrical, unusual, neat but murderous looking plant alone. [824] [122]

The plants that I actually saw in flower along the trail or in the fields were very few. There was the wild rose, the fog, the inconspicuous flowers of chush and the fringed gentian and a few poppies. Remember, this was in July and very few plants, shrubs or trees are in flower at that period.

Yet, I must bear in mind that from Gilgit to beyond Altit the difference in maturity would run about two weeks. While I ate some of the last of the cherries at the Political Agent's table in Gilgit, when I got to Baltit I was eating the first of the cherries that the Mir had picked from his trees of exactly the same species and variety. In fact, I came upon many peculiarities caused by the altitude and the proximity to the river. In one place the fog plants, for example, were in flower and in other places along the route, they had already formed seed pods. Again, in other spots the seed pods had already burst.

This is not unusual, because if you examine the situation in the Niagara District, for example, at Queenston the cherries are in full blossom when in Niagara-on-the-Lake, along the lake, the buds haven't even swelled. There is a difference of 10 days to two weeks between Niagara-on-the-Lake and Queenston and the distance is a scant 7 miles.

The plant that impressed me most was the fog plant.

291 open toes it could be just shaken out. These were the low or oxford-type footwear. Then the reason for the high tops on the other kind of shoes was clear. It meant that pebbles and stones and debris couldn't fall into them.

291 I learned, too, that in walking over trails of this type
122 one should always have on shoes that were sewn and in which no nails were used. On more occasions than I can attempt to recount, I stepped on a sharp rock and the nail in my soles or rubber heels went piercing through the soles of my feet. I had to stop on each occasion, unlace and remove my shoe, then get hold of a suitable rock and bang away until I bent the nail so it would no longer prick the sole or heel of my foot. So if you ever contemplate walking on roads or trails of this type, remember my warning, make sure that your shoes are sewn and have no nails in them.

122 The pack animal that was prepared for us was good enough to ride—much better than either of the animals that we had come up with. So Jahangir decided to use this mare as his mount and he sent his guide scurrying about to see if he could locate another pack animal.

At the P.A.'s in Gilgit, Jahangir had told me that he was taking off for Hunza alone. Now here as we were leaving Aliabad, I found that a guide turned up and it was apparent from the words that were spoken that this soldier had come up with him from Gilgit. The insignia on his shoulder clearly indicated that he was a soldier in the famed Gilgit Scouts.

I asked Jahangir how come he had a guide and he then informed me that the Scout Commander had flatly refused to allow him to set out alone for Baltit. Apart from anything else, in deference to Jahangir's parents with whom he was friendly, he would under no circumstances allow him to make the journey with-

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out the services of a guide. 122

I can assure you that the Commander carefully selected the man, too. Although he looked like a boy, he was tall—about 6 feet 2 inches—lithe, alert, in fact, as smart and as capable a type of human being or soldier or both as 'twould be possible to find anywhere. Not that Jahangir needed it, but he certainly was in "high caliber" hands.

Bearing in mind that the two ponies we had were stallions, I began to wonder if we might not have some trouble on the trail, because Jahangir's mount was a mare. To you, this may not appear to be a genuine source of worry, because in the West the horses used for riding are practically always gelded and this eliminates any risk of difficulty. So you either ride a mare or a gelding. 122 492

I thought to myself, "What would happen if either one of our stallion ponies began to get ideas on some of these high tortuous, winding mountain trails?" I knew from my reading that it does happen. 122

A man can work himself up into quite a stew by thinking of such things, and by now I was greatly worried about what would happen if my black stallion did become rambunctious on the trail. So I made up my mind that I would give that mare as wide a berth as possible.

I buried my worries by getting busy and snapping a few pictures of the type of houses that we found here at Aliabad. They didn't differ very much from those we found elsewhere. They were not as well built and as clean as those we had found at Altit, but they were still quite neat and tidy by most other standards. Practically all the houses are built one on top of the other, as close together as the undulating region would allow, and it sure was obvious that a person couldn't 342 [126] [361]

342 keep many secrets from his neighbors. From what I
361 saw, it was obvious that when a house was built in Hunza no attempt was made to level the ground but it was allowed to stand as nature made it and the house was erected according to the natural levels, dips, falls or heights.

As we wandered around the little Hunzan homes in this area, we had to climb up to get to this one, we had to drop down to examine that one and there were really no two on an identical level.

132 Then I remembered that the average annual rainfall in Hunza was 2 inches and to myself I thought, "Mighty good thing, because if it rained any more than that, what a quagmire this area would be!"

122 We heard the clatter of hooves and, looking up, we saw Jahangir's guide coming back and leading another horse. This meant we'd be ready to take off in a couple of minutes, so Cec and I worked our way towards the road.

Soon all of our belongings were firmly balanced on the horse's back and we were ready to start for the Hasanabad Bridge.

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CHAPTER 58

Baltit to Chalt--A Long Hard Day

THE EXHILARATING morning mountain air and the expanse of blue sky, landscaped by undulating masses in the distance and sparkled with a wisp of cloud here and there, made the march seem like a living dream. How often since I have been home have I longed for a day to begin this way.

The climb into the mountains started the minute we crossed the bridge at Hasanabad. We were now taking the trail that had almost spelled disaster for me on the way in. Those twists, those turns, those climbs, those declines had just about worn my legs to stubs. Never, through all my years of work, had I ever known what the word "tired" meant until then!

As Friend Cec remarked a few days later when we discussed this part of the journey, "Never did I see you look so grim! If any man could be said to be dragging his rear, it was you when you reached the jeep!"

●122 But now it was entirely different. I didn't regard the
487 snaky curves and loops with distrust and misgivings as I had the other day. In fact, then, I remember hating every turn I had to take. Now, with a good mount between my legs, I felt elated, happy, cheerful. Even though I started off riding, I knew that I wouldn't ride very far because I enjoy walking too much. But, still, it was mighty nice to know that you had a good horse in case you needed it.

From the start in the morning we knew it was to be a hard ride if we wanted to get to Chalt in one march. There was a full 32 miles to go. It was actually 36 miles but I figured the jeep had driven us 4 of them so that left 32.

[485] Neither Cec nor I discussed or mentioned it but I think we fully realized that, if we felt it was going to be too tough, we could stop off at Minapin which was but 15 miles away and would find the usual rest houses there. Yet, I couldn't see myself holing up at Minapin for the night. Why, we should be there shortly after noon, I figured, and I certainly had no intention of calling it quits then.

Besides, my recollections of Minapin weren't very appealing. It was the poorest looking and the dirtiest town of all we had passed through. We had stopped
[485] for a few minutes at the rest house on the way up and it had proved to be a disappointment. We couldn't get anything to eat there and the chowkidor expected a handsome donation because we stopped there and, I believe, had a glass of water.

Then, too, I knew that this was the stage for us to make time, as we'd have more protection from the sun because there were more trees in this area than there would be further down. Villages dotted the landscape
[36] as this was one of the more fertile districts and towns

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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and villages are invariably built where there are trees of one kind or another. So it was our best bet to tackle the sun while we had some protection against it.

I remembered also that in this area there were lots of nullahs and that conduits were found everywhere, so we could refresh ourselves with good fresh cold water all along the route. Further down there were very few nullahs or any other means of getting water except by marching down to the river's edge and this, friend, could be an undertaking!

At this stage the elevations ranged around 7,000 to 10,000 feet. I didn't carry an altimeter with me but I was informed that in some places we climbed to 12,000 feet. It certainly felt like it by the rarity of the atmosphere and the way my chest and lungs were behaving.

All through this broad area the mountain scenery is idyllic. It just can't be beat or improved upon, no matter where in the world you go. When I came up this selfsame trail on the inward trek, I was in no mood to appreciate beauty or mountain grandeur and I knew that I hadn't taken in very much. But now, I was determined to feast my eyes, my heart and my soul on the most beautiful, the most varied, the most awe-inspiring mountain vastness that is known to exist.

I was happy—I was carefree—I felt so light that I thought the horse wouldn't even know he was carrying a passenger. In all probabilities I'd never come this way again and I wanted that beauty engraved on my memory.

Through the years I had spent many weeks and months in the Rockies, from Alaska right down to the Mexican Sierras, and I believed the Rockies to be the most impressive range of mountains I had ever known. When I saw the Alps and compared them, well, there

133 tion or doubt, this area holds that lofty title!

I know that Tibet is called the "Roof of the World" but it is my contention that this is not right. Lhasa is at an elevation of approximately 13,000 feet and is surrounded by peaks whose heights are not more than 18,000 feet, whereas Baltit, the capital of Hunza, is located at an elevation of 8500 feet and the mountains surrounding it go well above 25,000 feet. So I don't think anyone can argue or deny that this, the Hunza area, is the true "Roof of the World."

122 133 At the time I visited Hunza, maps of the Kashmir and Jammu and Gilgit agencies were hard to come by and anyone holding them might be arrested and charged with being a spy by the military authorities in Pakistan or India, because that area is zealously guarded by both sides.

It was a major operation to get a map of that area showing the various territories, the peaks and the ranges and such, but with the aid of a good friend I managed to procure a very good one.

133 For anyone interested in mountains, glaciers, hidden valleys and such things as dreams are made of, this map makes fabulous reading and studying. Besides, you can daydream away pleasant, carefree, happy hours like mad, if so inclined. Try it! Your cares will float away like bubbles!

122 Profiting from the mistakes of the past, when we found a nice cool comfortable spot, we stopped to rest and munched on the sandwiches that were so kindly prepared by the Mir's staff for us to take along. They were put into a little tin box where they kept in good shape. I would have liked to eat more of the sandwiches but after I gave one to Cec and had one myself, I passed the rest along to the guides and bearers. (Jahangir carried his own provisions.)

Actually, I think this in many ways is a mistake. 122
Anything that you bring along for yourself on a trail like this should be kept for yourself and the reason is clear and obvious. On the trail both coming and going neither group of bearers or guides offered us as much as a nibble, whereas in every case anything that we had we passed along or shared with them.

The reason I contend this is wrong is simple. They are in their own territory. They know where food and water are available. I know, as I saw them procure it when they wanted it. In our case we were up against a stark, high, blank wall and had to ask for, drive for and pay for every morsel of food that we got on the trail.

If I were doing this selfsame job over again, I would plan my travels without worrying or consulting them one iota. Their opinions, their judgment and estimations are completely unreliable, when it comes to distance, time, height, depth, temperature—yes, and even dangers!

Now I'm not referring to the people in the category of the Mir or the P.A. or Jahangir. I am talking about the average citizen that one meets along the trails or in the towns or villages. While you are supplied with a 122
guide and bearer or bearers and you feel you can rely 485
upon them, they do not take into consideration that you are a stranger, a tenderfoot, and know little or nothing about the terrain and the place to which you are going.

I'm not trying to impress you with the fact that these people are ignorant because they are not ignorant. It is just that these things are beyond their ken and you must rely upon yourself and prepare accordingly. They have been ordered or hired to guide you to a certain defined place or to look after your horse and that is all they will do—nothing more!

122 485 This does not mean to imply that they are unreliable or unfriendly, because undoubtedly if you remained with them for any great time, you would become friendly with them and perhaps a feeling of camaraderie or loyalty would spring up. This belief has been confirmed by my conversations with people who have traveled through similar territories over longer periods. But in cases like this, where you hire a man for a day or two and you can't talk his language or make yourself clearly understood to him, the chances of getting any great amount of service are rather remote . . . that is, beyond the call of regular duties. In fact, I have learned and found that they will do only what they have to do and even getting this done will often take reminding!

122 The collapse of my friend on the first day out of Gilgit would never have occurred had we taken charge of the situation ourselves and stopped and rested every few hours for a few minutes, like any individual with common sense should have done. But we relied upon our bearers and guide. We were tenderfeet and stupid ones, to boot!

We were now beginning to feel like veteran mountaineers. It's funny how quickly a man can learn if his life depends on it. We weren't going to make the same mistake that we made coming up. This time we had no guide—just bearers--although Jahangir's soldier could be taken as a guide. In fact, he was probably better than most guides.

However, we were confident enough about the situation to carry on without any guiding or leading. I'm not trying to give you the impression that we were smart guys. It was just that we found out that there was no cause for fear or anxiety and once you beat that feeling, then you can go on through most anything.

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From what I have learned about mountaineering, I find that this principle generally is true. When you know the natives and appraise and understand the country you are in, the rest is just a task. It may be a difficult one but a task that, with good management and a bit of luck, can be accomplished. 122

In this instance we had good horses—the best. Secondly, we knew and understood the regions through which we must travel. Then, we had prepared a bit of food. But on top of it all, we were masters of the situation and we were not depending on anyone else!

The worst part of the day was from about 10 A.M. until 2 P.M. After that the sun and heat slowly headed downwards.

It was about 1.30 when we went through Minapin. This is normally the first stopping place from Baltit. We'd been up and about and on the trail for almost 8 steady, heat-filled hours, but we never even considered the idea of staying there. [485]

However, this was where the owner of the pack horse lived—the one that Jahangir's guide had managed to procure at Kerimabad—so we had to unload it. Jahangir dismounted and the luggage and all the trappings were carefully tied to fit around this horse that the Mir had sent along as a pack animal.

I took no part in the proceedings. Jahangir and his guide, as well as the two bearers, did the job and they did it right, unlike our first experience when we left Gilgit. We hadn't gone a mile along the Gilgit River when we began to have trouble, and hadn't we been at least half awake, we would have lost some of our belongings.

Here it was different. Whether it was due to the fact that we had Hunzan bearers, as compared to Gilgitis,

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122 or the fact that Jahangir and his guide were on the job, I don't know, but the loading of the horse was done properly.

"Why don't you arrange for another pack animal?" I asked Jahangir.

"In the first place, I don't know if I can get one. Then it would take a lot of time, especially if we want to make Chalt before night."

"But how's your foot?"

"Oh, I think it'll be all right," he said, smiling. At the same time he flexed his toes by standing on them a couple of times to see how his sore, chafed heel was taking the jolt.

"I know little or nothing about the mountains and climbing but it would be foolish if we went on and you ran into difficulty, when, by waiting a few minutes or even an hour or two, we could save you pain and trouble."

"Oh, I'm confident everything will be all right," he replied.

"Anyway, I'm not riding very much. So that hefty pony is available any minute you want him."

"No, thanks. I'll get along without him. I feel fine."

Now I had the feeling that Jahangir was somewhat annoyed at the Mir because the Mir had neglected to send along a horse for him. However, I have no proof or knowledge of this because first of all, Jahangir hadn't asked for one and secondly, he had come to Hunza with a guide without horse or pack animal and therefore the Mir would not rightly suspect or know that he wanted one to go back with. So all this may be pure conjecture on my part, but that was the impression I got and that's what I'm telling you.

ooo I had met Jahangir just as soon as we landed at the P.A.'s residence in Gilgit. I didn't know who he was

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